

followed their usual mode of living. His selected disciples, called his *companions* and friends, was such as submitted to a peculiar plan of discipline.

Previous to the admission of any person into the fraternity, Pythagoras examined his features and external appearance, enquired carefully into his former deportment, behaviour and mode of living, he observed his manner of laughing, conversing and keeping silence; his passions and the company he associated with; how he passed his leisure hours and what incidents created in him the greatest emotion of joy or sorrow. Nor after this examination was any one admitted into the fraternity till Pythagoras found him to be a fit and proper person to become a true philosopher.

Candidates for initiation were subjected to a severe discipline and examination before they were admitted to all the mysteries. They had to undergo the severest trials of abstinence and of vigorous exercises; and in order to teach them *humility* and *industry* they were exposed for three years to a continued course of contradiction, ridicule and contempt among their fellows; while on the other hand *equality* was taught by having united their property in one common stock for the good of the whole. If any one repented his connection, he was at liberty to withdraw and might obtain from the general funds the whole of his contribution, a tomb was erected to his memory as if he were dead, and he was no more thought of.

That his disciples might acquire a habit of entire docility Pythagoras enjoined upon them, from their first admission, a long term of silence called *echemythia*. Moreover, during the years of initiation, the disciples were prohibited from seeing their master, or hearing his lectures, except from behind a curtain, or receiving instructions from some inferior preceptor.

To the illuminated, that is the members of the esoteric school (who were called *gyeisoî emiletai*, genuine disciples), belonged the peculiar privilege of receiving a full explanation of the whole doctrine of Pythagoras, which was delivered to others in brief precepts and dogmas, under the concealment of symbols. Disciples of this class were permitted to take minutes of their master's lectures in writing, as well as to propose questions, and offer remarks upon every subject of discourse. After having made a sufficient progress in geometrical science, they proceeded to the study of nature, the investigation of primary principles and the knowledge of God. Those who pursued these sublime speculations were called "Theorists" and those who devoted themselves more particularly to Theology were styled Sabastikoi religions. Others according to their abilities and inclinations, were engaged in the study of morals, economics, and polity; and were afterwards employed in managing the affairs of the fraternity, or sent into the cities of Greece to instruct them in the principles of government, or assist them in the institution of laws.

The exoteric disciples of Pythagoras were taught after the Egyptian manner by images and symbols, obscure and almost unintelligible to those who were not initiated into the mysteries of the school; and those who were admitted to this privilege were under the strictest obligation to silence with regard to the recondite doctrines of their master. The wisdom of Pythagoras, that it might not pass into the ears of the vulgar, was committed chiefly to memory; and when they found it necessary to make use of writing, they took care not to suffer their minutes to pass beyond the limits of the school.